



News From

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CONGRESSWOMAN ♦ 13TH DISTRICT ♦ ILLINOIS

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ALL ABOARD...

ILLINOIS LAWMAKERS TAKE NEW BUSH ADMINISTRATION RAILROAD HEAD TO GROUND-ZERO OF TRAIN WHISTLE ISSUE

Decision on proposed rule due shortly

Clarendon Hills, Illinois –Members of Congress from the Chicago metro area today met with new Federal Railroad Administrator Allan Rutter to discuss the impact a proposed train whistle rule will have on communities across the 13th District and the Chicagoland area.

“Those of us who have significant and legitimate concerns about the proposed rule were encouraged by Administrator Rutter’s visit to ground-zero of the issue,” said Rep. Judy Biggert (R-13th). “As one who lives less than a mile from a railroad crossing, I took this opportunity to point out several libraries, schools, hospitals and houses along the Metra line – all within direct earshot of a piercing train whistle.”

Last December, Congress added a provision to an appropriations package that delayed finalization of the FRA’s proposed train whistle rule by six months. Eight-plus months later, a FRA decision is expected shortly. Under the FRA’s proposed rule, trains will be required to sound their horns unless communities make additional improvements at crossings that already have some of the most extensive safety systems and warning devices. In Illinois, this could deny funds for crossings in need of the most basic upgrades, particularly in rural areas.

Though the FRA estimates that only 250,000 residents of the Chicagoland area will be adversely impacted by the train horn rule, the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) estimates that more than 1.6 million local residents will be affected.

“Every train that cuts across the 13th District – from Aurora through Downers Grove to Chicago – will be forced to blast its horn continuously from the start of the line to the end of the line if the FRA’s proposed train whistle rule is implemented in its present form,” said Biggert. “Make no mistake – this rule is one of the all time great examples of a regulation that sounds *good* on paper, but sounds *terrible* in reality.”

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